Dear Irv:

Finally, here is the batch of fan mail that came for "Misunderstanding China." Charlie always feels the obligation of giving the writer a reply so that's what has taken me so long in sending.

Sorry, but there might be a few little errors here and there which I did not catch. Also, please check closely since many of them have asked questions about research, material, etc. Many are requesting transcripts and loan of the film.

Charles told me to tell you to answer them.

LOVE

Louise
3/16/72

IRV: MONDAY

Dorothy Jones called

Joe DeCola called - Said the show was "right on" - the best one on china - will call you tuesday

P.D Kuvalt called was going to call you at home - mrs

21 February 1972

EMMY SHEEHY
150 CLAREMONT AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10027

Dear Mr. Kurnitz

"Misunderstanding China" was a superb production. Congratulations to you on your rare understanding.

My interest in China dates back to the early 1900's when my aunt, a medical missionary in China, visited us and shared with us her enthusiasm for China and its civilization. She was far more doctor than missionary. One of her comments that I recall was "There is far more superstition in York County (Pa.) than in all of China!" We lived in York Co. Later she introduced me to Chinese poetry - and philosophy - through

Arthur Waley's fine translations. S
remembered birthdays and Christmas
with such treasures as a small
Oxblood vase, a precious hand copy of
a Chinese book of prophecy specially
prized because of its calligraphy - etc
But I shouldn't ramble on.

Aunt Madge would have been delighted
with your presentation.

I thank you.

Sincerely

Emmy Shelley

3/13/72

Dr. Dorothy Bisang

Watched your "juice" and thought it was just great.

QUICKI - NOTE®

DATE Feb. 26, 1972

TO Mr. Charles Kuralt
CBS - TV
524 West 57th Street, NY, NY 10019

SUBJECT Telecast 2/20/72
"Misunderstanding China"
sponsored by Western Electric

CErtainly enjoyed your program "Misunderstanding China" (as we do all your programs)!

Would it be possible to have such programs for each country--similar to the written LIFE World Library? So many of the problems in the world today originate from ignorance of the other peoples of the world--such programs which could give us a look at the people and their country, religions, culture, athletics, etc. etc. would be of great interest as well as increasing our knowledge of the world and its people.

Also
To include a like program on the USA which could be shown around the World! Thanks for listening!

FROM Mrs. Elinor O.M. True
RFD #2, Box 737
Plaistow, N.H. 03865
Elinor True

NATIONAL / SNAP-A-PART 47-232 MADE IN U. S. A.

15 GRAMERCY PARK
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

H. Salant

Feb. 21, 1972

The President
Columbia Broadcasting System
51 west 52nd St.
New York

Dear Sir:

In your program, "Misunderstanding China," telecast last night, you allowed your scriptwriter, Irving Drasin, to make the following statement (the wording is approximate):

"For the past 22 years the American and Chinese people have known about each other only what their governments have allowed them to know."

One wouldn't expect such a ludicrous statement from anyone except a Russian communist who had never been out of Moscow and had never read any foreign publications. Even a moderately sophisticated communist would acknowledge the difference between the totally controlled Chinese press and the variety of information available to American readers. Where has Mr. Drasin been for the past 22 years? And didn't any responsible person read his script before Charles Kuralt came on the air with it?

Left-wingers have the right to broadcast put-downs of the United States. CBS does not have the right to broadcast such a vicious lie about the U.S. under the guise of public information, public service programming.

Very truly yours,

Stephanie Dunkins

Copy to
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC

Gaston College
Dallas, North Carolina 28034

May 18, 1972

Mr. Charles Kavault
% C. B. S. News
51 West 52nd Street
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr. Kavault:

I want to congratulate you on your excellent documentaries on American attitudes toward China (presented last winter) and your more recent program on the Open Classroom.

In particular, I am wondering if you might have a list of your background material for the China program. Also, are these shows available for rental or purchase? The information on China would be most helpful to me in my teaching, as I am involved in social science, and I would like to use both films in future classes.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I will appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Barbara M. Sullivan

Barbara M. Sullivan
General Studies Faculty

BMS/bh

CBS NEWS
A Division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.
524 West 57 Street
New York, New York 10019
(212) 765-4321

Dear Mr. Freeman:

Thank you for your letter about "Misunderstanding China." Mr. Kuralt is traveling, but I shall call your friendly letter to his attention when he returns. Meantime, I am sending a copy of your letter to Irv Drasnin, the broadcast's producer, who, I am sure, will also be interested in your reaction.

Very truly yours,

Louise G. Colon
Sec. to Mr. Kuralt

Mr. John P. Freeman
3614 Gridley Road
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122

April 3, 1972

JOHN P. FREEMAN
3614 GRIDLEY ROAD
SHAKER HEIGHTS, OHIO 44122

March 27, 1972

Mr. Charles Kuralt
Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.
CBS Television Network Division
51 West 52nd Street
New York, New York 10019

Re: Misunderstanding China

Dear Mr. Kuralt:

You and your CBS news broadcasting team deserve a special pat on the back for what was a virtuoso performance.

Sincerely yours,

John P. Freeman

CBS NEWS
A Division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.
524 West 57 Street
New York, New York 10019
(212) 765-4321

Dear Mr. Broch:

Thank you for your letter about "Misunderstanding China." Mr. Kuralt is traveling but I am sending a copy of your letter to the broadcast's producer, Mr. Irv Drasnin, who will handle your request for a transcript.

Very truly yours,

Louise G. Colon
Sec. to Mr. Kuralt

Mr. Terry Broch
Asst. to the Editor
TRUE
One Astor Plaza
1515 Broadway
New York, New York 10036

March 16, 1972

TRUE
one astor plaza, 1515 broadway, new york, n.y. 10036
212-869-3000

February 23, 1972

Mr. Charles Kerault
Columbia Broadcasting Systems, Inc.
51 West 52 Street
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Kerault:

We would appreciate a transcript copy of the program broadcasted on Sunday evening, February 20th, entitled MISUNDERSTANDING CHINA, on Television Channel 2, in New York.
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Terry Broch

Terry Broch
Assistant to the Editor

tb/d

February 22nd, 1972

Mr. Charles Kuralt
C. B. S.
51 West 52nd Street
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr. Kuralt: Re: MISUNDERSTANDING CHINA

We want to express our appreciation for your wonderful job on Misunderstanding China on TV the other day. As Chinese, we had seen the foreign invasions in China ourselves; and since we had immigrated to this country sixteens years' ago, we have never seen a documentary about China better than yours.

May we congratulate you on the factual report and hope you will continue to do more of this kind of documentary about other countries to bring the true to the American people, so that we can understand others better.

Very sincerely yours,

Monte + Marie Liang

Monte & Marie Liang
69-02A, 186th Lane
Fresh Meadows, New York, N.Y. 11365

CBS.
Cronkite,

As I send a critical note to Sandy Van O. + PBS re the horrible biased 2/21/72 performance of Lisagor, Frankel, Even White - I found myself referring to the very excellent attempt at myth breaking about China on CBS on the day Nixon left for China.

CBS coverage has been by far most constructive. The "carpers" won't hurt the Chinese people (& who would want to?) it only keeps the people of U.S. more confused and adds another myth.

Charlie!

Enjoyed your story of
saving 14 mules in
Wyoming! C

How anyone can pretend
ignorance of China - ? —
all sorts of channels have
been open for years!

As a P.B.S. supporter
wishes to thank CBS
for good stories.

Clemmie Barry

Dick Barry
1118 Sir Francis Drake Blvd.
Kentfield, Calif. 94904

Feb. 20, 1972

Mr. G. Kuralt and Mr. I. Drasnin
CBS News
New York, N. Y..

Dear Mr. Kuralt and Mr. Drasnin:

We enjoyed and learned much from your program of "Misunderstanding China". We think that it is a very thorough, thoughtful, and educational production and we like to thank you for your good work.

Sincerely yours,

Stanley S. Tseng

Stanley S. Tseng, M. D.

712 Bridgeman Terrace
Towson, Md.

1628 South 118th East Avenue
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74128
February 20, 1972

Charles Kuralt
CBS Television
524 West 57th Street
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr. Kuralt:

In reference to your recent special, "Misunderstanding China", I would like to say your title is most appropriate, for the conclusions any viewer would reach would certainly lead to anything but true understanding of China. My Chinese-American friends laughed in outright derision at your romanticizing everything Chinese, and your blatant deprecating of everything American.

How conveniently you twisted true history and belittled facts, and "forgot" to add pertinent details that might have led to a more genuine understanding of China today. According to your program, the Christian missionaries were patronizing and arrogant in their attitude to help the "backward" Chinese, and were therefore an evil upon the land that would have been better off at home. The only virtue you attribute to the missionaries is that they at least started some schools and hospitals, but you lost no opportunity to denigrate their original religious intentions. My Christian Chinese friends, who happen to have been converted in China did not appreciate your insults.

You lost no time in denouncing Sun Yat-Sen (horrors, a Westernized Christian---how un-Chinese can one get!), and also Chiang Kai-shek, his wife and her sisters. Yet you found no time to denounce the Communist Red Chinese, nor to enumerate the atrocities perpetrated by them upon their own people. You did not mention, for instance, the number of Chinese people who flee mainland China every year because they do not care to live under a Communistic regime of force. You seem fanatically eager to accept the limited news coming out of China since 1949 as gospel truth, when in fact it is Red Chinese propaganda. In regard to education, health, plenty of food, etc., you do not have the slighest question that these "facts" might in reality be myths.

Why? Why is CBS so ready to white-wash the present Communist regime in China? Are the people really better off now? You imply that they are. Did the majority of the Chinese have a FREE choice in the present form of government? Is there any resistance among the Chinese people to this total lack of freedom? CBS couldn't care less. Did you bother to ask the people of Nationalist China (I believe you call it Taiwan) how they feel about the Communist rulers in China?

I dare say I have, personally, more Chinese friends than the people who researched and wrote this program. At least half of them were born in mainland China and remember vividly the heart-wrenching agony of fleeing the land of their birth. What a pity you could not have interviewed some of these truly wonderful people. I consider it an honor to be counted among their friends, and I am proud they have found a measure of freedom in the United States, a land whose values we all uphold. What a pity CBS still does not understand the real Chinese people, but seems so anxious to eulogize the Red Communist dictators of mainland China. I wonder why.

Sincerely,

Anne V. Bowker

(Mrs.) Anne V. Bowker

NBC NEWS
A DIVISION OF NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.
THIRTY ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10020, CIRCLE 7-8300

STUART SCHULBERG
Executive Producer
"TODAY"

February 25, 1972

Mr. Perry Wolff
Executive Producer
CBS News
35 West 45th Street
New York, New York

Dear Perry Wolff:

I watched your special at 6 p.m. last Sunday night with great admiration. It was the most interesting, stimulating and valuable lesson about China I've seen yet--not in terms of Maoist politics which I'm tiring of already but in terms of the real equation, the ultimate human relationship that our two peoples will have to develop if the politics wind up meaning anything at all. I didn't recognize the names of most of the contributors, but I wish you would pass on to them my respect and gratitude.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

Stuart Schulberg

Stuart Schulberg

SS:cc

Edwin H. Blum

801 North Rodeo Drive
Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210

275-6690

2/20/72

Mr. Chas. Kurrault
CBS News
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Kurrault:

On witnessing your presentation on China on tonight's show, I must compliment you on setting an historic landmark in the total story of T.V. news coverage.

Your coverage was penetrating, honest, and presented with great taste and total understanding of the entire complex problem.

It is a pity that Cronkite and Sevareid and the others on the regular news programs do not seem to have the total historic grasp that you have demonstrated.

They are nitpickers. You should have gone to China.

Thank you, thank you,

Edwin H Blum

arts & pleasures

a daily critique by WWD

THE TUBE

China

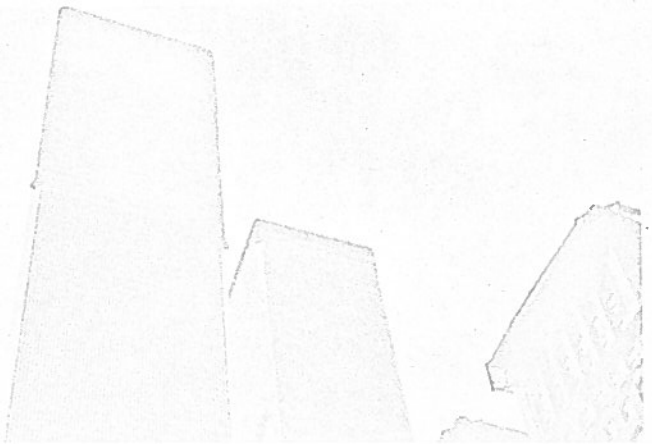
After having pretended for more than 20 years that China was an island off the coast of Asia, Americans have been bombarded this week with glimpses of reality. Our leader, for whom the central issue in the 1960 campaign was whether we should be prepared to wage war to defend our illusion that China was an offshore island, is now going to inspect the mainland exotics at firsthand. At the same time that the newspapers informed us the President was being given a crash course on China, other media were doing the same for the public — Newsweek devoted an issue to China; virtually every TV channel has given its viewers a look behind what used to be called "the Silken Curtain."

What is most remarkable about all this is that very few of the facts presented this week would be new to alert Europeans or even well-read Americans — that they are being presented to the public as "news" is a feat even Pravda would have to admire.

One of the things that makes CBS' "Misunderstanding China" (to be aired Sunday at 6 p.m.) an exemplary documentary is that, instead of simply putting forward information about the Chinese in a "now it can be told" tone, the picture of contemporary China is presented in the context of the decades of ignorance and almost willful misunderstanding that preceded our sudden desire for the facts.

Teddy Roosevelt, the documentary points out, called the Chinese "an immoral, degenerate, worthless race." Even Emerson, imagining the nations bringing their contributions to civilization to a gathering, thought the Chinese would have nothing to bring but tea. Pulp fiction created the image of the Chinese as a race of arch-villains, an image upon which Hollywood lavished all the power of its special effects.

The Japanese air war against China led to a new sympathy on the part of Hollywood, but it also created new, equally false stereotypes: The Chinese were a race of superstitious, oppressed children. As the excellent narration puts it: "Our best-known actors and actresses led the Chinese to safety and salvation . . . China was the background for our superiority, a theatre for our idealism."



Not all the misconceptions came from Hollywood. Many of the Americans who went to China were missionaries, whose only concern was, as Noel Coward once put it, "to lead the wretched heathen to the light," or, as a missionary film explains, "They carry the yoke of Satan — this is the yoke we must lift."

Having shown, through marvelous clips from newsreels, travelogs and Hollywood features, the source of many of our misconceptions about China, the program is somewhat easy on the press, not driving home the way newspapers and magazines tended to reinforce myths rather than dispel them, not mentioning, for example, the effect of the missionary approach to China on the son of missionaries, Henry Luce.

The CBS documentary does a brilliant job of showing how misconceptions about China formed in the early decades of this century were echoed in the distortions about China that the American press encouraged after 1949, how, for example, the Cultural Revolution, an event still difficult to understand, was used simply as a pretext to revive the notion of the Chinese as "faceless hordes."

The program ends with some beautiful color photography by European cameramen showing everyday life in China today; some kindergarten children marching and imitating elephants; some young people strolling quietly in lovely public parks.

Similarly, one of a group of spectacular color photographs by French journalist Marc Riboud, in the Metropolitan Museum's exhibit, "Behind the Great Wall," shows families picking wild flowers that grow along the Great Wall, again an illuminating contrast to the photos of the Chinese simply as fanatics.

The Metropolitan show also puts China into a context: It is easier to understand pictures of Red Guards exhorting people after having seen Robert Capa's striking 1938 photograph of "student-soldiers" rallying the public against the Japanese. The photos that give one the greatest understanding of the enormous transitions and crises the Chinese have undergone in the last 40 years are those of the incomparable Henri-Cartier-Bresson. There are also some haunting family-album type shots of the present leaders of China taken during the '30s by Edgar Snow, who lived with them when they were "in hiding," who did more than any American to help his people understand China, and who died ironically, sadly at the very moment that understanding began to take place.

— HOWARD KISSEL

THE DANCE

National Ballet

This week, the National Ballet is at City Center, which makes it a good place to avoid.

The company's production of "The Sleeping Beauty" is amiable and, to some degree, enjoyable, but its program of five short works is just too bad to be true. "Beauty" is a luxurious and ambitious production, conceived in the grand style,

think wistfully of a visit to the dentist, or of being trapped in a stalled subway train. The technique was inept enough to be funny, the phrasing was nonexistent and the line and definition could have been bettered by an amoeba.

The company's "Les Sylphides" is filled with jetes that pop instead of arch and arabesques penchés that seem to be fight-

1514 17th st. nw.
Washington, D.C. 20036
20 February 1972

Irv Drasnin
CBS News
51 W. 52 St.
New York 10019

Dear Mr. Drasnin:

Misunderstanding China was a great show. Its enough to restore one's faith in CBS News. Efforts like tonight's show go a long way toward balancing the image created by indulging in tricks like flying Cronkite & Co. to Paris to get film of what the mainland Chinese delegation to the U.N. looks like. (None of the envoys had horns. I wonder if anyone was surprised.) That sort of thing leads one to conclude that television can show us everything but teach us nothing. Your show disproves that.

I'm doubtly impressed. First there is the message that we know little about China and are filled with misinformation, largely the result of our own efforts. But the point could have been made in many ways and didn't insure the beautiful script that resulted. It was the best I've heard since CBS starred Bill Bosby in a black history series several years ago. I'd begun to think the only one at CBS News who wrote really well was John Hart(or his writer). I was wrong.

But the most encouraging thing involves a bigger issue. Shows like yours give one the impression that someone up there is really thinking about what things mean. Often I'm left wondering whether CBS News is populated entirely by technocrats who think of nothing more than how to come up with yet another exciting chapter in the saga of Howard Hughes. So much of what is presented is beautiful but trivial.

I hope someone at CBS is giving some thought to the general question raised by your show about media performance in reporting international trends. It would be embarassing five years hence to see you produce a show about socialist South America and how few people in the United States realized what was happening down there. Howard Hughes in Managua is worth repeated reports, Salvador Allende in Santiago and the right-wing generals in Brasilia aren't. The British coal strike gets more media coverage in a week than Cuba or Canada receive in a year. We can only hope that what we don't know won't hurt us. History has proven otherwise.

If you ever have a need for someone who writes well, but would like to be as polished as you are, hire me. In the meantime, accept my congratulations. Your show was impressive on several levels. I hope that it marks the start of a new trend and is not a one-shot effort that will be completely overshadowed by the hours of technically beautiful, but intellectually vapid programs that I anticipated being beamed from China in the next week.

If you ever get to Washington, I'd appreciate a chance to talk with you.

Sincerely,

Jim Jaffe

R.H.A. Dales
206 Forestdale Drive
Taylors, S.C., 29687

February 21, 1972

Columbia Broadcasting System
C.B.S. News: " 60 Minutes"
Attn: Producer "Misunderstanding China"
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir,

We were delighted to see and hear your above production Sunday night, February 20.

We consider both, the pictures as well as the narrative outstanding and trust that your enlightening news will help our President's mission and the creation of an era of better understanding between the new world of China and the New World on this side of the oceans.

We admire especially your capability of compressing so much thought and the salient facts of recent history in proper sequence in so little time.

Sincerely,

Mr and Mrs Reinier H.A. Dales

UNI

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA · Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

R. S. Newell
Department of History
AREA 319 [illegible]

February 24, 1972

President, CBS News
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

I want to take a few minutes off to commend your organization for the excellence of its documentary "Misunderstanding China" which was narrated by Charles Kuralt on Feb. 21st. Its timeliness is obvious enough. What won my gratitude and admiration was its effectiveness in nailing down in graphic strokes our persisting insistence on going off half cocked about China. The use of old movie clips was a stroke of genius; especially using the death of Steve McQueen in the "Sand Pebbles" as a transition into an analysis of what has gone wrong since we tried to take the Chinese under our wing in the late nineteenth century.

The selection of film, the editing, and the narration were excellent. As a college professor specializing in Asia I would hope that CBS will be able to make tapes or films of the program available for school and community use. No matter what happens in Peking this week, the message you put over is likely to remain pertinent for some time to come.

Sincerely yours,

Richard S. Newell
Assoc. Prof. History

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

February 22, 1972

Mr. Irv Drasnin
Producer
C.B.S. News
524 West 57th Street
New York, N. Y. 10019

Dear Mr. Drasnin:

Thanks for your letter of February 9 alerting me to your "Misunderstanding China." I had a chance to see the film--in a Chinese restaurant in Boston (where I was attending a friend's wedding feast), no less--and found it exceptionally well done. That last sequence of the American soldier heroically hoisting the Chinese girl onto his horse from Fifty-five Days in Peking leaves one clutching the stomach. But then, I expect we may have some contemporary dignitaries returning home in similar fashion on high horses.

I'll be back in Ann Arbor over the summer. If I can be of any future assistance let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Richard H. Solomon

CBS NEWS
A Division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.
524 West 57 Street
New York, New York 10019
(212) 765-4321

Dear Dick:

I appreciate very much your thoughtful note and your most generous remarks regarding "Misunderstanding China."

I'm glad to know that it was Charlton Heston, and not the MSG syndrome, that left you clutching your stomach!

I hope all goes well in Washington and that we will have the occasion to meet again.

Sincerely,

Irv Drasnin
Producer

Mr. Richard H. Solomon
National Security Council
Washington, D.C. 20506

March 1, 1972

Sun
Feb 20

4670

Just watched "Misunderstanding China." That show is a classic - and the timing of it was perfect.

Congrats to Western Electric too.

You guys have moved world peace ahead with that kind of presentation to a mass American audience. I'd love to meet the people who put it together.

Vaya con Dios

Clyde Mowris
Asst. Prof. of Communication
Mich. State Univ.

[redacted]

1103-A Lawrence St.
Radford, Va. 24141
Feb. 20, 1972

Gentlemen:

~~Your~~ TV Special "Misunderstanding China" is just about the best documentary ever presented on TV! Congratulations and commendations!

I just hope it has been as enlightening to others in America as it has been to me. I shall view President Nixon's trip in a somewhat different way, and I shall have a new view of (and interest in) modern day China. As you said, "My views have changed!" Thank you. Sincerely,